

THE DELAWARE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COUNCIL PRESENTS



# DELAWARE VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACADEMY

SUMMARY OF STUDENT FEEDBACK: SEPTEMBER 2022

*Based on the National Victim Assistance Academy model, the CJC brings a premier training and education program for new and beginning victim assistance providers that is specific to Delaware.*

The third Delaware Victim Assistance Academy was a success! Posttest data show a statistically significant increase in the posttest scores, **indicating learning took place**. Additionally, evaluation data collected throughout the week showed that students responded positively to the engaging and supportive learning environment. At the close of the DVA, students indicated that they feel able to transfer their new skills and knowledge to their current roles and share what they learned with coworkers. Additionally, students appreciated the opportunities to collaborate and network with classmates from a variety of other agencies.



2022 DVA Graduates

## PRE- AND POSTTESTS

To determine significance in the increased knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the victim assistance field, students completed a pre- and posttest. These tests contain at least two questions from each module. Students averaged 69% on the pretest and 82% on the posttest, with a lower standard deviation on the posttest—meaning less variation in the spread of scores. Using a t-test to compare pre- and posttest responses, results indicate that **the increase is statistically significant** ( $p < .001$ ,  $n = 21$ ). The pre-test was given during the virtual DVAA Orientation Meeting (7/27/22). The posttest was given after the final module on Thursday during the in-person Academy (9/15/22). **The average score increase strongly suggests that participation in the Academy improved student achievement.**



**"I ENJOYED THE ACADEMY. I AM PROUD TO HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND LEARN FROM SO MANY POWERFUL, SMART, AND CREATIVE INDIVIDUALS. I LEARNED A LOT I DID NOT KNOW. THANK YOU!"**



*2022 DVAA Graduate*

## MODULE SCORES

To measure the effectiveness of each module and its facilitators, participants completed evaluations for each module; each quantitative question was rated on a 4-point Likert scale measuring attitudes from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The overall average score for each module considers each respondent's answer for the eight questions in the set of evaluations. Students also provided qualitative feedback at the bottom of each module evaluation sheet. A list of each module with its title, average score, and a comment that captures the essence of students' remarks can be found on page 4.

**Average module scores ranged between 3.4 and 4.0, meaning that the students firmly agreed that the content, facilitation, and topics were in line with or exceeded their expectations.**

Compared to the 2021 DVAA, the 2022 modules were rated slightly lower on average. This variation could be explained by the smaller space (with less room to move around and network), or the new hybrid model, where 8 hours of content were moved online, plus the fact that the week was shortened by one day.

**This indicates that the updates between 2021 and 2022 achieved the goal of providing a hybrid virtual/in-person event, but the updates did not appear to improve the experience for students.**

Given the extremely high ratings from the 2021 DVAA (between 3.9 and 4.0 across all modules), the bar is very high. However, as the Faculty and Planning Groups continue to strive for excellence, suggestions on structure, content, and space availability will be taken into account in future planning efforts.

## HIGHEST SCORING MODULES

### 1) Module 15: Resilience as Self-Care

**Average score of 4.0**

The facilitator conducted an activity on the beach that involved writing in the sand.

### 2) Module 10: Trauma-Informed Care

**Average score of 3.99**

Facilitators demonstrated the lasting effect of Adverse Childhood Experiences by guiding participants through an activity where small groups competed to build a "brain" while going through various life scenarios.

### 3) Module 7: Victims' Rights in the Criminal Justice System

**Average score of 3.98**

This module featured a dynamic panel of service providers sharing their experiences working with victims in different justice Systems.

**"I really loved this training, especially the connections and support I made/received from my fellow advocates!"**



## STUDENT FEEDBACK

Students emphasized their favorite aspects of their academy experience and identified areas for growth in the qualitative feedback section of the evaluations. The main suggestion for improvement was **more time in-person** to foster resource sharing and networking. Like previous DVAA Classes, 2022 students **loved the high engagement and impact of learning activities**, which they noted were exceptionally interactive and involved discussion and sharing between students. Students took advantage of opportunities to discuss complex topics, such as safety planning strategies and the Empowerment Model. They also explored resources, such as the identification of civil remedies to help connect survivors with the options that are right for them. The week offered situations to practice active listening skills and grounding techniques to use with individuals who are in crisis. DVAA Graduates walk away with tangible skills and a certificate that enables them to apply for professional certification through the National Advocate Credentialing Program.



**"I think all advocates who work with victims of crime/DV should do this!"**

## MODULE TOPICS, AVERAGE SCORES, & TOP COMMENTS

### 2 – Victim Advocacy & Collaboration (3.91)

“The activities were helpful especially the fishbowl exercise... I found the info about setting boundaries to be really helpful since I tend to want to help as much as I can, but I need to work on understanding a person can't do everything.”

### 3 – Communication Skills (3.90)

“Breakout sessions were challenging yet very helpful and informative.”

### 4 – Ethics & Boundaries (3.84)

“The dilemmas activity was helpful because it got us up and moving as well as helped with starting discussion on different perspectives on ethics.”

### 5 – Child Safety (3.87)

“Guidance on how to make DFS report was helpful. Learning about the DFS process in more detail was also useful.”

### 6 – Sleep as Self Care (3.46)

“Very helpful since I struggle with sleeping.”

### 7 – Victims’ Rights in the Criminal Justice System (3.98)

“The CJ system is so overwhelming for me to understand. This made it more comprehensible.”

### 8 – Inclusivity (3.98)

“This session gave me a lot to think about what our agency should look to do to become even more welcoming and inviting for all.”

### 9 – Mindfulness as Self Care (3.94)

“I liked the different activities to ground yourself... Traditional meditation & breathwork hasn’t been helpful for me in the past so seeing alternative ways to practice mindfulness was helpful.”

### 10 – Trauma-Informed Care (3.99)

“The best trauma informed training I have experienced.”

### 11 – Civil Remedies & VCAP (3.93)

“Very informative-good to know & use for future reference.”

### 12 – Gratitude as Self Care (3.97)

“I feel humbled from this... I loved this session!”

### 13 – Safety Planning (3.84)

“PFAs were very new to me—other participants were great resources of knowledge too!”

### 14 – Jeopardy (3.97)

“Exciting, engaging, competitive.”

### 15 – Resilience as Self Care (4.0)

“I liked the beach activity with writing in the sand!”



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